

Guidelines for the Management of Catalyst Grant

Funds are provided for a maximum period of up to twelve (12) months, unless otherwise stipulated in the Letter of Award. Applicants should have an awareness of the feasibility to complete the study within the stipulated timeframe and that includes fulfilling the ethics and research agreement requirements.

Approvals from Ethics Committees

1. A letter with the necessary approval(s) from the relevant ethics board and committees must be sent to CDA, within two (2) months from date of these approvals. Failure to do so may delay the reimbursement of Funds.

Research Collaboration Agreements

2. The Institutions may undertake work on the Research in collaboration with a Collaborator. Where and when this occurs, the Investigators are responsible for putting in place research collaboration agreements that are signed by the Institutions.

Reimbursement of funds

3. All Institutions will be required to ensure that the expenditures are fundable, necessary, and reasonable for the conduct of the Research. All Institutions must also verify claimed items with source documents, before submitting the claims for reimbursement to CDA.
4. A list of fundable & non-fundable direct cost items is provided in the Annex 2Annex 1.
5. All expenditure should be incurred (based on invoice or service rendered date) within the Term¹.
6. In general, prudence should be exercised for all project costs, and expenditures claimed must comply with the Institutions' internal procurement processes, guidelines, and policies.
7. CDA reserves the right to reject any claims that (a) have resulted from changes to the Research without prior approval from CDA; and/or items determined by CDA to be non-fundable, not necessary, not reasonable, not relevant, or not used for the Research.

Expenditure of Manpower (EOM)

8. Funding of Research Personnel under the grant must comply with prevailing and consistently applied human resource guidelines of the employing Institution(s). This will extend to Institutions' prevailing policies on associated human resources costs (e.g., staff insurance, employment benefits, employment levy, employment pass, pre-examination medical check-up & housing allowance).

¹ Expenditures related to on-boarding of research personnel may be supported before the start of Term but must be made in accordance with the Institutions' human resources policies and after the date in which the CDA receives the completed Acceptance Form.

9. All EOM related expenses shall be pro-rated from the project start date, except for lump-sum insurance claims, which shall be allowable in full. As a general principle, staff costs should be charged based on time commitment to the Research.
10. Details of Research Personnel employed under the Funding must be provided in the manpower listing of the reimbursement claim form, and continuously updated, including new additions and those whose employment have ended.
11. All Institutions must adhere to the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices².
12. The Institution(s) are allowed to make manpower changes (e.g., increase/decrease in headcount, change in designation or scheme of hires, change in time commitment to the grant etc), as long as the changes (i) are necessary for the Research; (ii) comply with the Institution(s)' policies; and (iii) do not exceed the EOM vote.

Equipment ("EQP")

13. There shall be no purchase of all equipment three (3) months before the project completion date. If any extension(s) of the Term is granted by CDA, the project completion date shall refer to the latest project completion date of the extended Term.
14. The Institutions and Investigators shall ensure that the purchase of each equipment is necessary for the Research or activity supported by the Funding and is not otherwise reasonably available and accessible.
15. For high value equipment purchase, Investigators are required to update the list of equipment acquired, as part of the Final Report submission. CDA may require the Institutions and/or Investigators to allow approved Third Parties to access and use the equipment, subject to the availability of the equipment.
16. The Institutions are allowed to make changes within the EQP vote (e.g., changes in quantity and changes in equipment etc), provided that these changes are (i) necessary, relevant, and used for the Research; (ii) do not constitute a change in Research; and (iii) are kept within the approved equipment vote budget.

Other Operating Expenses ("OOE")

17. The Institutions are allowed to make changes within the OOE vote (i.e., changes in quantity and changes in OOE items), provided that these changes are (i) necessary, relevant, and used for the Research; (ii) do not constitute a change to the Research; and (iii) are kept within the approved OOE vote budget.

Indirect Costs

18. Indirect costs in research are those costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular sponsored research project but contribute to the ability of the Institutions to support such research projects (e.g., providing research space, research administration and utilities, and not through the actual performance of activities under the sponsored projects etc).
19. The Catalyst Grant does not include indirect costs.

² Please refer to www.mom.gov.sg for details of the Fair Consideration Framework.

Variations to the Research

Virement between Votes

20. CDA delegates the approval authority for the virement of funds between the votes to the Institution's Director of Research (or equivalent), subject to a cumulative amount not exceeding ten percent (10%) of the total project direct cost value.
21. For virements cumulatively above ten percent (10%), the approval authority remains with CDA. For projects with a Term of at least twelve (12) months, requests should be submitted to CDA no later than three (3) months before the project completion date.
22. Retrospective virement requests or late requests to CDA will not be allowed unless there is compelling justification.
23. Inter-institutional virements, where applicable, require (a) CDA's approval; and (b) acknowledgement from the Directors of Research (or equivalent) of all Institutions involved.

Grant Extension

24. Extension requests will not be accepted unless there are very compelling reasons. Please write to the grant administrator immediately in the event of such situation.

Change in Lead Principal Investigator or Investigators

25. CDA's approval will be required for a change in the Lead Principal Investigator or Investigators.
26. The Lead Principal Investigator plays a significant role in steering the Research towards its intended objectives. As such, the Host Institution will be required to inform CDA immediately and provide a mitigation plan, should there be a long leave of absence by the Lead Principal Investigator or change to the Lead Principal Investigator. The Host Institution will be required to provide the CDA an assessment of why the proposed replacement Lead Principal Investigator would be a suitable fit to steer the Research towards its envisaged goals. CDA reserves the right to suspend or terminate the Research if the mitigation plan is not satisfactory.

Change in Host Institution

27. CDA's approval will be required should there be a change in Host Institution. The request must be made to CDA and be endorsed by the Directors of Research (or equivalent) of both the existing and new Host Institutions.

Change in Research Scope

28. CDA's approval will be required for any change(s) to the scope of the Research. This includes change, removal or addition of scientific objectives, Deliverables, or Milestones.

29. If an activity or task initially meant to be carried out by the Investigators or Institutions is subcontracted or entrusted to a third-party, this would also constitute a change in Research and CDA's prior approval will be required.

Final Report

Final Report

30. The Institutions are required to submit a Final Report within three (3) months from the end of the Term.

Comprehensiveness of Report

31. Investigators will be required to give additional information about the progress and outcomes of any Research if the information submitted in the Final Report is deemed by CDA to be inadequate.

Final Claims / Statement of Account

32. The Institutions are required to submit a Final Statement of Account or Final Claims to CDA within three (3) months of the completion of the Research, or termination of the Contract, or the end of the Term, whichever is earliest.

Debarring of Investigators

33. Lead Principal Investigators who fail to submit the Final Report and/or Final Statement of Account within the stipulated timelines will be debarred. Debarred Lead Principal Investigators will not be eligible to submit new grant applications as Lead Principal Investigator for a period starting from the report submission deadline, and ending one (1) year from the date the overdue Final Report or Final Statement of Account is received by CDA.

Acknowledgement Guidelines

34. All Institutions should attribute any (a) awards won by the Research; and/or (b) further grants awarded to the Research, to CDA Catalyst Grant.
35. At any time, during or after completion of the Research, the Institutions should acknowledge CDA for its funding support in any publication (including on the Internet) of any material based on or developed under the Research.
36. Published materials include scientific publications, books, journals, articles, newsletters, brochures, posters, websites, conference materials, case studies and reports.
37. In public communications, effort should be made to acknowledge the funding support provided by CDA in media releases, interviews, speeches, videos, or any other media materials.
38. Where possible, the acknowledgement statement should follow:

"This research is supported by the Communicable Diseases Agency (CDA) under its Catalyst Grant."

Please email RCA_Grants@cda.gov.sg should you have any enquiries.

39. Please be informed that the Research will be tracked for 3 years from the completion date of the project.

Conflict of Interest

Guiding Principles

40. Investigators and other Research Personnel involved in the Research must ensure that the well-being of human subjects and research integrity are never compromised by the pursuit of personal gain, interest, or advantage. The robustness and validity of the Research may be called into question if biases of any form arise that could affect the planning, conduct, analysis, and reporting of the Research.
41. Actual or potential conflicts of interest may arise when the personal or family interests and loyalties of any Investigators or Research Personnel conflict with the interests of the relevant parties, including CDA, Host Institution, Third Party Collaborators, sponsors, regulators, publishers and human research subjects or patients.
42. Some conflicts of interest may lead to undesirable outcomes, such as (but not limited to):
- 42.1. biased judgments (for instance, in the selection of human research subjects for enrolment, care provided to subjects, and the use of subjects' confidential health information), resulting in loss or harm to the human research subject;
 - 42.2. biases in study design, data collection and analysis, adverse event reporting, or presentation and publication of Research findings, thereby threatening scientific validity; and
 - 42.3. impressions or perceptions of improper actions of some or all parties concerned.

Examples of Situations where Conflict of Interest might occur

Financial Conflict of Interest

43. Financial conflicts of interest may potentially arise in the following situations (which are not exhaustive):
- 43.1. receipt of incentive payments or payments for each human research subject enrolled;
 - 43.2. receipt of significant payments of any sort (such as grants, compensation in the form of equipment, retainers for ongoing consultation, or honoraria) to support activities exclusive to the costs of conducting the Research, or for any other purpose not directly related to the reasonable costs of conducting the Research;
 - 43.3. receipt of compensation in any form that may be affected by or dependent on the Research outcome;
 - 43.4. entitlement to Intellectual Property rights over, or proprietary interests in, the article under Research, including patents, trademarks, copyrights, or licensing agreements; and
 - 43.5. equity interest in other sponsors of the Research.

Non-Financial Conflict of Interest

44. Non-financial conflicts of interest may potentially arise in the following situations (which are not exhaustive):
 - 44.1. benefits or advantages, such as enhancement of an individual's career, education or professional reputation; and
 - 44.2. privileges, such as access to privileged information, or free or discounted access to resources (such as services or facilities).

Responsibilities on Conflict of Interest

45. It is the responsibility of the Investigators and other Research Personnel to identify and disclose to the Host Institution all conflicts of interest, whether actual, potential, or perceived. Where there is uncertainty as to whether an interest could result in a conflict, Investigators and Research Personnel should err on the side of caution and disclose that interest for review by the Host Institution.
46. It is the responsibility of the Host Institution to put in place comprehensive policies and procedures to ensure that Investigators and other Research Personnel do not put themselves in a position or potential position of conflict of interest in relation to the Research, and to assess and address such conflicts if they do or potentially do arise.
47. At a minimum, the Host Institution's conflict of interest policies and procedures should:
 - 47.1. be clear, unambiguous, transparent and readily accessible to Investigators and other Research Personnel;
 - 47.2. determine what amounts to a conflict-of-interest situation that needs to be disclosed (conflicts of interest that may have an impact on human research subjects should, however, always be required to be disclosed);
 - 47.3. determine when conflicts of interest should be disclosed, and require Investigators and Research Personnel to provide updates and disclosures at regular intervals and as and when there are relevant changes in circumstances (such as, but not limited to, when new collaboration agreements are entered into, or existing ones modified);
 - 47.4. include possible follow-up actions that may be taken to examine and to address conflicts of interest, where necessary;
 - 47.5. always prohibit payment or the giving of other incentives, or promises or offers of payment or the giving of other incentives (for instance, from a sponsor to a member of the Research Personnel) that are conditioned upon a particular Research result or tied to a successful Research outcome; and
 - 47.6. be consistently applied and enforced through effective remedies and sanctions.
48. The Host Institution shall keep clear, comprehensive, and updated records of conflicts of interest that had been reported to it and which it had dealt with in relation to the Research.
49. Where requested, the Host Institution shall make its conflict-of-interest policies and procedures available to CDA.

Dispute Resolution

50. Any dispute or disagreement arising out of or relating to this Contract, or the breach thereof (“Dispute”) shall as far as reasonably possible be amicably resolved by negotiation between the parties.
51. In the event that any Dispute cannot be amicably resolved by negotiation between the parties, the parties must make reasonable efforts to resolve the same through mediation in accordance with the mediation procedure of the Singapore Mediation Centre. A party who receives a notice for mediation from another party shall consent and participate in the mediation process.
52. Neither prior negotiation of the Dispute under Clause 51 nor prior reference of the Dispute to mediation under Clause 52 shall be a condition precedent to the reference of the Dispute to litigation by either party. Further, any such escalation or reference shall not affect either party’s right to refer the Dispute to litigation forthwith.

Additional guidelines for Financial Regulations can be referred at Annex 2.

List of Fundable/Non-Fundable Items**Fundable Items**

Manpower Category	
General Policy	<p>For research assistants, research technicians, research fellows or any staff needed to support the research, Institutions shall use reasonable efforts to employ or otherwise engage Singapore Citizens and/or Singapore Permanent Residents.</p> <p>The term “research assistants” or “research technicians” or staff of equivalent qualifications shall mean staff performing mainly technical tasks as well as providing support functions distinct from the work carried out by the investigators.</p> <p>While these staff may provide intellectual input to the research, they are not required to be directly involved in the management of research or to provide leadership in the conception and creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods, and systems. At the point of entry, research assistants and research technicians will typically not be required to possess PhD qualifications.</p> <p>For clarification, “research assistants” will not include existing nurses and other hospital workers who may assist in the research.</p> <p>All Institutions must continue to adhere to the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices¹.</p> <p>¹Please refer to www.mom.gov.sg for details of the Fair Consideration Framework.</p>
Salaries, CPF and fringe benefits including medical, dental, contribution to welfare fund, etc.	<p>Allowable as part of overall compensation to Employees funded through the programme, provided such costs are incurred under formally established and consistently applied policies of the Host Institution. “Employees” refer to research team members such as research fellows, research engineers/scientists, research assistants/associates, biostatisticians, nurses, and technical officers.</p> <p>The salaries offered to staff should be reasonable, in line with local market benchmarks and comply with formal established pay scale of the Host Institution that is consistently applied regardless of the source of funds.</p> <p>Each staff must be individually identified by designation and his/her salaries, CPF and fringe benefits estimated. Expenses pertaining to dependents shall be excluded.</p>
Bonus / Incentive payments	<p>Allowable as part of a total compensation package, provided such payments are reasonable and are made according to a formal policy of the Host Institution that is consistently applied regardless of the source of funds.</p>

Annual leave	Allowable for Employees. The number of days of leave accorded to staff must be in accordance with formal policies of the Host Institution that are consistently applied regardless of the source of funds.
Staff insurance	Allowable, provided that the staff insurance is incurred under an established and consistently applied policy of the Host Institution.
Equipment Category	
General Policy	There shall be no purchase of all equipment <u>three (3) months before the project completion date</u> . If any extension(s) of the Term is granted by CDA, the project completion date shall refer to the latest project completion date of the extended Term.
New Equipment (including hardware and software)	Allowable if specifically required for the Research. Equipment must be individually identified, and the cost of each piece of equipment should be inclusive of bank charges, delivery, and installation, etc. Any equipment purchases shall also be subject to an established and consistently applied policy of the Host Institution.
Other Operating Expenses Category	
Consumables	Allowable. Examples of such costs are costs of supplies and materials, laboratory consumables, animals and drugs which are necessary for the successful execution of the project. All procurement of such items must be reasonable and made in accordance with formal, established and consistently applied policies of the Host Institution or Partner Institutions.
Use of services, equipment rental or lab spaces within the Host Institution's or Partner Institutions' central facilities	Allowable. The cost for the use of the services and central facilities owned by either the Host Institution or by Partner Institutions, such as animal holding units, central laboratory services, are allowable and must be based on institutional fee schedules which are consistently applied regardless of source of funds. Institutions may also be requested to certify that the fee structure is applied consistently.
Bank charges	Allowable as long as it is specifically related to the payments for consumables and equipment used in the research project.
Books and specialised journals relevant to the research	Purchase of books, specialised journals or lab manuals are allowable only if these are directly related to the project. If the Host Institution has a library, books and journals should be obtained from the library, and the Lead Principal Investigator should refrain from purchasing the same books or journals.

Customs and import duties	Allowable as long as it specifically relates to importation of consumables and equipment used in the project.
Photocopying and printing charges	Allowable, inclusive of printing costs for posters as long as it specifically relates to the research project.
Publications	<p>Allowable, if publication is of the results and findings of the Research. Page charges for publication of manuscript in professional journals are allowable if they adhere to established policies of the Host Institution, where applicable.</p> <p>The costs of reprints and publishing in other media, such as books, monographs and pamphlets are not allowed unless specific approval has been obtained from CDA.</p>
Transportation, postage & courier services	<p>Allowable.</p> <p>This includes postage, courier, and freight charges for bringing in equipment and specialised research consumables, and reimbursement for staff transportation in accordance with the Host Institution's policies.</p>
Payment to research participants and other related costs	<p>Allowable for payment to research participants in Singapore, provided this is within the scope of the Research. Claims will need to be supported by documents acknowledged by research participants when they receive the payment, including the participants' details and signature, date of visit, amount paid and vouchers details (if applicable).</p> <p>Press advertisement costs for recruitment of research participants are also allowable.</p>
Conferences	Allowable for staff who are part of the study team, and if the conference or training is directly relevant to the research area or necessary to accomplish the project objectives. Documentation for attendance or completion of conference or training will need to be submitted.
Others	Other miscellaneous costs which are directly related to the project may be allowed subject to approval from CDA based on the justifications provided. Example of such items are ethics review cost, equipment authorisation fee etc.

Non-fundable Items

Manpower Category	
Salaries of Lead Principal Investigator, Investigators, visiting professor researchers, Collaborators, and administrative support staff	Not allowable.
Equipment Category	
General purpose IT and communication equipment	Not allowable unless specifically provided for and approved in the grant. Examples of such costs are computers, office productivity software, personal digital assistant, mobile phones, workstations, printers, etc. The procurement of such equipment must be reasonable and in accordance with the established and consistent policies of the Host Institution.
Cost of capital works and general infrastructure, office equipment, furniture, and fittings.	Not allowable.
Other Operating Expenses Category	
Teaching buy outs	Not allowable for the hiring of substitutes to perform the Investigators' teaching duties.
Stipend top-up for existing post-graduate scholarship holders	Not allowable.
Undergraduate stipend and tuition support	Not allowable.
Costs related to general administration and management	Not allowable. This includes common office equipment, such as furniture and fittings, office software, photocopiers, scanners, and office supplies.
Cost of office or laboratory space	Not allowable. This includes renovation and/or outfitting costs, rent, depreciation of buildings and equipment costs, and related expenditures such as water, electricity, general waste disposal and building/facilities maintenance charges.

Personal productivity equipment and tools, and communication expenses	Not allowable unless the use of mobile phones and other form of smart devices were indicated in the methodology for the Research.
Audit fees (Internal and external audit) and legal fees	Not allowable, except for audit fees for Institutions without approved grants from the National Medical Research Council (NMRC).
Entertainment	Not allowable.
Refreshment	Not allowable unless this is related to a hosted conference or workshop related to the Research.
Fines and Penalties	Not allowable.
Patent Application	Not allowable. This includes patent application filing, maintenance, legal and other related costs.
Professional membership fees of Lead Principal Investigator, Investigators, visiting professor researchers, and Collaborators	Not allowable.
Professional fees (including fees for consultants)	Not allowable unless specifically provided for and approved in the grant.
Staff retreat and team-building activities.	Not allowable.
Insurance premiums	Not allowable.
GST	Not allowable, if claimable from the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS).
Overseas travel	Not allowable.

Additional Guidelines on Financial Regulations

Reimbursement of Funds

1. CDA will assign a unique research reference to the Host Institution for all approved Research under the Host Institution's purview. This project reference must be quoted by the Host Institution in all claim submissions.
2. The Host Institution should in the first instance pay for the expenditure incurred for approved projects and subsequently claim for reimbursement from CDA. CDA will only make payment for the Research to the Host Institution, and to no other person. Any expenses incurred by the Investigators are to be submitted through the Host Institution to CDA for reimbursement.
3. All claims for reimbursement should be made in the format prescribed by CDA. The claim should also have a unique claim reference number in which CDA will quote when making payment to the Host Institution.
4. Each claim form should be substantiated with supporting documents like copies of invoices, debit notes, receipts and delivery orders.
5. For equipment purchased, the Host Institution can submit the claims upon receipt of the equipment, prior to the commissioning process. The responsibility is on the Host Institution to ensure that the commissioning of the Asset is properly carried out, and appropriate actions are taken to address any shortcomings (e.g. seek refund from vendor, replacement for the faulty equipment, etc.). ***There shall be no purchase of all equipment three (3) months before the project completion date. If any extension(s) of the Term is granted by CDA, the project completion date shall refer to the latest project completion date of the extended Term.***
6. Before forwarding claims to CDA for reimbursement, the Host Institution should ensure that:
 - 6.1. Claims are properly certified and dated by the Host Institution's Chief Finance Officer and Principal Investigator or their designated officers to be correct;
 - 6.2. Supporting documents are arranged in the order prescribed in the CDA claim forms;
 - 6.3. Claims are not in breach of Terms and Conditions and the Contract; and
7. All expenses incurred **after** the duration of the Term will not be reimbursed by CDA. The invoices for all claims must be dated **before the project completion date**. In addition, all project claims for reimbursement should be submitted to the CDA **within 3 months** from the date of completion of Research, or termination of this Contract, or the end of the Term, whichever is the earliest.
8. CDA will only fund items which directly relate to the Research based on the Letter of Award. All Funding will be net of what is already supported via existing research grants or institutional funding to ensure that there is no double dipping of funds from the various grant pools. Stern action will be taken against those who commit double dipping. This may include (but shall not be limited to) the suspension or termination of Funding.

Monitoring of Budget Utilisation

9. Institutions should internally monitor the progress of their projects and the cash flow utilisation on a regular basis (e.g. quarterly), and perform risk assessment on their projects, with greater scrutiny on the progress of the larger projects.

Revenue and Receipt

10. Should the Host Institution or Lead Principal Investigator expect to receive any revenue or receipt other than the revenue from Assets or Intellectual Property Rights which are generated directly or indirectly from Funding, the Host Institution must inform CDA immediately of such potential receipts.
11. CDA reserves its right to direct the usage of such revenue; whether to be remitted to CDA or to be used by the Host Institution to promote, support or further medical research in the Host Institution.
12. The Host Institution must keep and maintain a full, comprehensive and updated set of statements, accounts and records documenting the gross revenue, received by the Host Institution, whether directly or indirectly.

Expenditure and Payment

13. The Host Institution and Lead Principal Investigator must ensure that they have received written approval from CDA on the Funding before committing to any expenditure on the Research, unless specifically permitted by CDA.
14. It is the Host Institution's responsibility to ensure that all payments adhere to CDA's Policies, unless otherwise specifically permitted by CDA, and are also in accordance with the Host Institution's formally established and consistently applied policies or regulations on similar payments.
15. Minimally, the Host Institution must ensure that the following conditions for payment are satisfied before payments are made:
 - 15.1. services have been duly performed; and/or
 - 15.2. goods have been delivered and received in a satisfactory condition.

Procurement

16. The Host Institution is to ensure that any procurement (including items for individual use as specifically required in the course of the Research – e.g. mobile phone, etc.) made using the Funds is carried out in accordance with the Host Institution's prevailing in-house procurement policies and procedures.